

Manhattan Plant Materials Center



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Sudden Oak Death (SOD)

In the January 2003 Manhattan PMC Newsletter (Volume 10, Number 1) we mentioned the fact that a new serious fungal disease of oak had recently emerged on the west coast of the United States. The potential economic impact of this disease is currently considered high. The disease has demonstrated its ability to kill healthy mature trees of at least 4 *Quercus* and *Lithocarpus* species. The disease is caused by a fungal species called *Phytophthora ramorum*. In September of 2003, scientists reported that the disease was attacking redwood and Douglas fir species in California and southern Oregon. Douglas fir is one of the main stays of the Northwest's timber and Christmas tree industries, which together are worth billions of dollars. Employees for the Weyerhaeuser Company are closely watching the infestation in southern Oregon, which is still limited to a small area. Weyerhaeuser, which owns or leases more than two and half million acres of timberland in Oregon and Washington, is concerned that the infection will spread and cause quarantine restrictions of their products. California foresters and nursery owners are already suffering under increasing numbers of state, federal and even international quarantines restricting the movement and sale of infected plants or plant products. State regulators have had to reconsider which of the harvests from California's productive lands will be quarantined and which will not. There is a question over what to do about infected bay tree leaves that are harvested from forests and used to make bay leaf wreaths. How much should

Douglas fir be restricted considering its popularity as a Christmas tree and a prime source of timber and pulp? How likely is it that redwood bark, widely used as landscape mulch, is going to be infectious? Much remains unknown. Scientists do know the disease was first identified in Europe in 1993 on ornamental rhododendrons. A cure for now appears illusive. Currently, sanitation and destruction of infected individuals appears to be the best course of action. One of the biggest unanswered questions is how will this plant epidemic finally play out? Dutch elm disease and chestnut blight took 50 years to run their course. *Phytophthora ramorum* was first identified in 1995 as the cause of sudden oak death. How will the disease progress in the next 20 years? Will environmental conditions slow its progress or accelerate it? Are there cultural methods that could slow the diseases progress? Much remains unknown. For additional and updated information on SOD, visit <http://nature.Berkeley.EDU/comtf/educationmaterials.html>, <http://www.suddenoakdeath.org>, or conduct an Internet search by Sudden Oak Death.

Second Generation Longren Hires on At PMC

Jerry Longren is the newest employee at the Manhattan PMC. He is new to NRCS and began working for the Center on February 9th of this year. Jerry came on board just in time to travel with the rest of the staff to the first All Employee's Meeting that Kansas has had in a long time. He is a former employee of the State of Kansas and worked many

years for the Horticulture Department at Kansas State University. Jerry has a broad knowledge of plants and equipment and will



be an invaluable member of the Plant Materials Team. Jerry and his wife Cathy have three children, Travis, Shelby, Jared and three grandchildren. He and Cathy both enjoy flying as a hobby. Jerry's father, Warren Longren, worked as a technician at the Center for 17 years from 1966 to 1983. Jerry is filling the technician spot left vacant when Gary Luplow went to work for the Union Pacific railroad in October of 2003.

Plant Materials Publications

The National Plant Data Center and Plant Materials Program have added a new searchable module called Plant Materials Publications. Like Plant Guides and Plant Fact Sheets, this is another successful collaboration between the Plant Data Center and Plant Materials. PM Pubs allows bibliographic searches of many of the publications produced by the Plant Centers and Plant Materials Specialists. These publications deal with the selection, establishment, growth, management, and uses of the hundreds of plants that NRCS utilizes in their conservation programs. Approximately 400 publications are searchable, and this number should increase quickly. For more information go to

the PLANTS web site at <http://plants.usda.gov>.

Plains and Prairie Forestry Association Meeting Scheduled for June 14-16, 2004

The North Dakota members of the Plains and Prairie Forestry Association (PPFA) are extending an invitation to attend the 2004 PPFA meeting in Bismarck, ND. Two hundred years ago in 1804 Lewis and Clark led the Corps of Discovery up a Missouri River that looked very different from the Missouri River woodland of today. In recognition of Lewis and Clark's 200th anniversary the North Dakota members of the PPFA have created an agenda focusing on the challenging issues surrounding riparian forestry in the Great Plains. The meeting will consist of a series of presentations ranging from the history of the Missouri River forests to current restoration activities, while tours will focus on current management issues along the Missouri. Craig Stange, PPFA Conference Chair, invites you to visit Bismarck, ND and immerse yourself in the history and wonders of the Missouri River. Enjoy the ancient cottonwoods that just might have provided shelter and shade to Lewis and Clark so many years ago. For additional information contact Craig Stange @ nd.usda.gov or go to the web site http://www.ag.ndsu.nodak.edu/aginfo/trees/whatnew/PPFA_2004_Conference.htm



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